

et al. with the sheet of Gendler to provide adaptation and conformity to the configuration of a skeletal region to b [*sic.*] repaired.”

Applicants’ invention, as presented in independent claim 1, is directed to a bone sheet for implantation, the sheet comprising an at least partially demineralized field substantially surrounding at least one mineralized region.

Applicants’ invention, as presented in independent claim 9, is directed to a method of forming a flexible bone sheet comprising: providing a sheet of cortical bone; creating at least one hole in the cortical sheet which is configured and dimensioned to receive a fastener; masking the cortical sheet proximate the at least one hole to create a masked region surrounding the at least one hole; and applying demineralizing agents to the cortical sheet around the masked region.

The Office Action states that “[w]ith respect to claim 1, Grooms et al disclose a ligament, tendon, and joint bone implant (300) comprising at least partially demineralized field (303) substantially surrounding at least one mineralized region (301), as set forth in column 4, lines 25-35.” But, as noted above, the Office Action states that “Grooms et al. did not teach of a bone sheet for implantation” while “Gendler evidences the use of a bone sheet.” With respect to Grooms, the Office Action relies on Figs. 3 and 3A. With reference to these figures and the description thereof in Grooms, an implant used to replace a ligament includes a flexible segment **303** disposed between transition zones **304**, **305** and mineralized fixation blocks **301**, **302**. As understood, Grooms therefore does not disclose much less suggest an at least partially demineralized field substantially surrounding at least one mineralized region. In particular, an at least partially demineralized field does not substantially surround either of the mineralized fixation blocks **301**, **302** of the Grooms construction. Although Gendler discloses flexible membranes produced from organic bone matrix for skeletal repair and reconstruction, Gendler also does not disclose much less suggest an at least partially demineralized field substantially surrounding at least one mineralized region.

With respect to claims 9-13, the Office Action states that “the method steps, as set forth, would have obviously carried out in the operation of the device, as set forth above.” Applicants respectfully disagree. Grooms discloses that mineralized fixation blocks **301** and **302** each have a canal **306**, **307** machined therein for receiving a fixation screw or pin. But, as understood, neither Grooms nor Gendler, alone or in combination, disclose much less suggest: providing a sheet of cortical bone; creating at least one hole in the cortical sheet

which is configured and dimensioned to receive a fastener; masking the cortical sheet proximate the at least one hole to create a masked region surrounding the at least one hole; and applying demineralizing agents to the cortical sheet around the masked region.

With respect to dependent claims 2-8 and 10-13, it is submitted that these claims are patentable not only because of the patentability of the independent claims from which they depend, but also for the totality of features recited respectively therein.

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all pending claims are in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. If the Examiner does not agree, then a personal or telephonic interview is respectfully requested to discuss any remaining issues and accelerate the eventual allowance of the claims.

A fee is believed to be due for the presentation of new claims, and a Fee Transmittal Sheet is submitted concurrently herewith. Should any additional fees be required, please charge such fees to Pennie & Edmonds LLP Deposit Account No. 16-1150.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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Enclosures